

**BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**  
**URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE REVIEW PANEL**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** June 26, 2014 **Meeting No.:** 187

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**Project:** West cold Spring Lane **Phase:** Discussion

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**Location:** Cold Spring Lane and I-83

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**PRESENTATION:**

Developer Dan Galluzzo of Aquity, LLC reintroduced the project to the Panel. He indicated that the program has evolved, particularly the nature of the retail and the inclusion of an 80,000 square feet medical office building. He acknowledged the challenge of the project as it is isolated and self-serving, yet located with the City limits and adjacent to a light rail station.

Mr. Donald Kann, Principal of Kann Architects, identified the program components of the project. They include:

Phase I:

- 20,000 square feet of retail;
- 80,000 square feet of office;
- 180 residential units
- 60 surface parking spaces; and,
- 190 structured parking spaces

Phase II:

- 15,000 square feet of retail;
- 300 residential units; and,
- Approximately 360 structured parking spaces (1.7 per unit)

Following the discussion of the project's program components, the Architect presented the previous site concept which organized buildings along a north/south vehicular entry drive and along an east/west pedestrian spine oriented south to approximately 20 acres of open space. Changes to the site concept and massing diagram for Phase I include a medical office building and a separate residential building, both resting on a one story base. Phase II changes include two residential buildings separated by a grand stair leading down from Tamarind Road to the vehicular turn-around and pedestrian plaza thirty feet below.

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PANEL:

The Panel was pleased with the addition of 80,000 square feet of office use within the development, creating a truly mixed use project and providing additional daytime pedestrian traffic to support retail and energize the project. Splitting the large building masses in both phases of the project into two separate buildings within each phase was viewed as a positive urban design gesture. The Panel reacted favorably to the “concept” of a pedestrian stair connecting the upper Tamarind Road plaza down to the lower civic plaza and vehicular turn-around. However, they questioned the circuitous nature of the path, the scale of the stair and that it was not on axis with the civic plaza.

## T.O.D. AND PARKING:

The Panel continued to question whether the project functions as a complete Transit Oriented Development. The adjacency of the Light Rail and public bus stops ensure public transit patrons access to the project, but it appears that no parking has been planned for commuters traveling by car who would want to use the Light Rail service. The Panel continues to feel this is a missed opportunity.

With respect to parking, the Panel felt the sixty surface parking spaces provided in Phase I for retail patrons, office workers, and medical patients was inadequate. It was unclear to the Panel how the 190 spaces of “shared” structured parking spaces for residents and the public could work.

## URBAN DESIGN CONCERNS:

The Panel expressed disappointment that the concept plan had not been advanced to address previous concerns raised about the lack of a pedestrian oriented environment and connectivity; the creation of meaningful open space and the suburban approach to the placement and massing of buildings.

## CONNECTIVITY:

- Vehicular: The Panel urged the Design Team to explore ways to connect vehicular circulation up to Tamarino Road and/or connect to Phase II development.
- Pedestrian: Pedestrian cross-walks and traffic calming devices should be employed throughout the project, particularly along the entry drive. The public stair connecting Tamarino Road area to the lower plaza should be direct, not circuitous; and on axis with the plaza. Relocating the residential garage entries off of the plaza should be considered.

- Building Location: Presently, the residential blocks of Phase I and II are isolated and not part of the civic plaza experience. The Design Team must study ways to better engage these buildings and their entry points with the plaza. Viewing all four buildings as a means to define and energize the plaza is paramount.
- Promenade: Continued investigation and design of the ‘promenade’ should be considered. The current proposal lacks any true activation of the walkway with no entrances, retail, or connectivity of the walkway to the activities within the project. Activation of this space will be key to the success of a safe and vibrant connection to the LightRail station and project.

### CREATING MEANINGFULL OPEN SPACE:

The Panel expressed concerns about the vision and execution of the civic plaza and vehicular turn-around. The overall size of the plaza, approximately 150 by 150 feet is not adequately defined and contained in three dimensions. The pedestrian area south of the vehicular turn-around, approximately 40 by 150 feet, is somewhat isolated due to the vehicular turn-around and the access to both residential garage entries. This entire zone is dominated by hard surface paving.

- At this stage, given the importance of the plaza, the engagement of a landscape architect with proven experience creating meaningful and successful public open spaces would be well advised.
- The monumental cascading stairs down to the open space, approximately 100 feet in length; is inappropriate to the scale and nature of the plaza. Perhaps the Design Team should consider the plaza as a raised “look-out” perched above the open space with connecting stairs smaller in scale, more intimate and less heroic.
- The Panel expressed concern that the plaza is not defined in three dimensions and urged the Design Team to consider reconfiguring the residential block in Phase I and the southern residential block in Phase II to be adjacent to the plaza. Additionally, the strong 45 degree angled wall on the north building of Phase II should be restudied to create a stronger “street wall” and edge to the plaza.
- The Panel noted that successful public plazas are energized by constant activity. To that end, they urged the Design Team to locate the entries to all four building directly off of the plaza.
- The Panel suggested the plaza shift slightly to the south to be on axis with the pedestrian stair in Phase II.

### MASSING:

The Panel continued to question several aspects of the project massing. Specifically, the Panel felt the reliance of the 45 degree angled corners, a suburban approach; compromised the integrity of the buildings and their role in defining adjacent open space.

The Panel expressed concerns about the length of the north/south oriented wing of the residential building in Phase I, measuring approximately 300 feet in length. The Panel offered the following recommendations with respect to massing:

- Study reconfiguring the north/south oriented wing of the Phase I residential block. It was suggested that taking the southern part of this wing and turning it 90 degrees west toward the civic plaza would be beneficial. Such a potential gesture would reduce the length of the wing and at the same time better “connect” this residential building to the plaza.
- Study reconfiguring the north wing of the southernmost building in Phase II so that it is better engages the plaza.

**PANEL ACTION:**

Discussion Only

**Attending:**

Dan Galluzzo, Lisa Krick – Aquity  
Cass Gottlieb, Vipul Talwar, Donald Kann – Kann Partners  
Lemmella Walston – Comptrollers’ Office  
Adam Bednar – The Daily Record

Ms. Meany, Messrs. Bowden and Burns\* - UDARP Panel  
Anthony Cataldo, Christina Gaymon –Planning Dept.